

February 19, 2015

Good Afternoon Senator Leone, Representative Baram, and Esteemed Members of the General Law Committee:

My name is Betsey Chadwick. I am the Director of the Middlesex County Substance Abuse Action Council, or MCSAAC. On behalf of my fellow twelve RAC directors in the state of Connecticut, collectively known as the Connecticut Prevention Network, I am here to support **SB 386, An Act Prohibiting the Sale of Powdered Alcohol**.

First, a few facts about powdered alcohol. The leading US manufacturer of powdered alcohol is Lipsmark, producer of Palcohol. One ounce of Palcohol powder mixed with 5 ounces of water is equivalent to one standard mixed drink. Current flavors include the Cosmopolitan, Mojito, Margarita, and Lemon Drop, as well as unflavored powder. It is set for release in Spring 2015.

What is the point of powdered alcohol? According to Lipsmark, the most likely users will be campers, hikers, and kayakers who want a "refreshing adult beverage" at the end of their day in the woods. Whether or not this is plausible, no other consumer use is offered by the manufacturer.... other than the fictitious assertion that it will lighten the load of passenger airplanes.

In reality, it will be easy to take a few spoonfuls of sugary powder into a concert, school, or sporting event. As the Superintendent of Middletown Schools, Dr. Pat Charles writes, "The ability to conceal powdered alcohol is problematic for schools and law enforcement. The ease of transporting it and the flavors proposed also make me concerned that it would lead to abuse, not just by young people but even for those of age. This product must not be allowed to come into our state."

The promotional materials for Palcohol cleverly raise the issue of using the powder on food. "When you add Palcohol to food, you're not really adding flavor to the dish, just alcohol. Please use it responsibly. Because it adds alcohol to the dish, do not serve the dish to minors."

Of course, it is minors who will be *most* attracted to this novelty product. Peruse YouTube and you'll find that young people have already discovered that crystallized alcohol blends nicely with the cheese and sauce on pizza. Just shake it on with a cheese shaker.

A successful liquor store owner in Cromwell, CT stated that "A sugar-packet-looking product containing alcohol is meant to deceive the recipient. There are far too many of these non-alcohol tasting items already on the market."

Federal agencies may never respond to our concerns about powdered alcohol. Therefore, states are taking control. Vermont and South Carolina have banned it. Legislators in Michigan, New York, Minnesota, Ohio, and Idaho are considering banning or limiting the product.

Connecticut already has a youthful binge-drinking problem. Powdered alcohol can only exacerbate it. When a young person is in control of *how much* powder is mixed into *what kind* of liquid, it's inevitable that we'll wind up with "high-octane beer" and "Jell-O shots" that put kids right over the edge.

We see no upside to powdered alcohol. There are only downsides. Please support the Connecticut Prevention Network and its 13 participating Regional Action Councils in ensuring that **Senate Bill 386** becomes law.

Thank you.